



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029

Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy

Dear Ms. Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy

Thank you for your electronic correspondence of February 3, 2014 to President Barack Obama, which was received by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), regarding your concerns about the Elk River chemical spill in West Virginia which occurred in January. EPA shares your concern about the chemical spill and the quality of the drinking water. I would like to take this opportunity to provide information on EPA's role in responding to this spill and the related drinking water concerns.

EPA has been monitoring the incident and has been in close communication with the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection and the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (WVDHHR), who responded promptly to this spill. They continue to take steps to remedy the release and restore the drinking water for the people of the Charleston area. The Federal government, including EPA, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, has mobilized resources to support the state agencies through every step of this emergency. An EPA emergency responder has been at Freedom Industries throughout the incident, and EPA drinking water personnel have been in contact with WVDHHR and the West Virginia American Water Company to provide assistance and advice.

The chemicals involved in the January Elk River spill, 4-Methylcyclohexanemethanol (MCHM), propylene glycol phenyl ether (PPH) and dipropylene glycol phenyl ether (DiPPH), are not currently regulated by EPA under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), few studies exist on the specialized chemical MCHM, and toxicologic information on PPH and DiPPH is limited. However, CDC has developed protective levels for purposes of responding to this emergency. Additional information on MCHM, PPH, and DiPPH, and an explanation of how the protective levels were calculated are available at CDC's website:

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/chemical/MCHM/westvirginia2014/index.asp>.

It is our understanding that West Virginia is developing a program for tap water testing in homes. Information on this effort can be found at <http://www.dhsem.wv.gov/Pages/WV-American-Water-Emergency.aspx> (Click on West Virginia Testing Assessment Project (WVTAP).) The state agencies have the lead for this effort and EPA is providing technical

support. EPA will remain in close coordination with state agencies as the study progresses.

West Virginia American Water Company is providing the most current information on this situation to its Kanawha Valley Customers on its website: <http://www.amwater.com/wvaw/about-us/news.html>.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. William Arguto, Chief of EPA's Drinking Water Branch, at 215-814-3367.

Sincerely,

Jon M. Capacasa, Director
Water Protection Division

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CONCURRENCES

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